

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 190466
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S/S-O: DPFOTENHAUER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 190466

EXDIS FOR ASST. SEC. TODMAN

FOLLOWING REPEAT CARACAS 7893 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO PANAMA
10 AUG 77

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 7893

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, PN, VE

SUBJECT: BOGOTA MEETING AND CANAL TREATY--REQUEST FOR
PRESIDENT CARTER'S REACTION

1. PRESIDENT PEREZ ASKED TO SEE ME AFTERNOON AUGUST 9
TO ASK ME TO PASS TO WASHINGTON THE FOLLOWING THREE
POINTS:

2. A) AT BOGOTA (AND I TAKE IT THIS WAS THE REAL
REASON HE WANTED TO SEE ME), THE CHIEF OF STATE AGREED
TO CIRCULARIZE THEIR COLLEAGUES IN THE HEMISPHERE CONFIDENTIALLY
AND ASK THEM TO AGREE TO MEET IN PANAMA UPON THE SIGNING
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OF THE FINAL TREATY--AND TO WITNESS THE SIGNING--BY WAY OF
ENDORISING AND UNDERWRITING IT. PRESIDENT LOPEZ WAS
COMMISSIONED TO WRITE A CONFIDENTIAL LETTER TO ALL CHIEFS
OF STATE PROPOSING THIS. THE IDEA WAS THAT SUCH A MEETING
WOULD BE QUIET, WITHOUT SPEECHES OR FANFARE. THE PURPOSE
WOULD BE TO COMMIT ALL LA NATIONS TO THE TREATY. THIS,
CAP SAID, SHOULD HELP THE USG IN THE RATIFICATION PROCESS

BECAUSE IT WOULD DEMONSTRATE LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY TO THE SENATE. HE RECALLED THAT HE HAD MENTIONED THIS GENERAL IDEA TO PRESIDENT CARTER WHO HAD APPROVED OF IT IN GENERAL TERMS. (I NOTE THAT PRESIDENT ODUBER RECOMMENDED ESSENTIALLY THE SAME THING TO AMBASSADOR WEISSMAN; SAN JOSE 3572.)

3. I ASKED HIM WHAT THE MODUS OPERANDI WAS TO BE-- WAS THE SUGGESTION TO BE MADE TO THE SIGNATORIES TO INVITE OR WOULD THE CHIEFS OF STATE TAKE THE INITIATIVE AND APPEAR, OR WHAT. CAP SAID THAT ONCE LOPEZ HAD RECEIVED REPLIES TO HIS QUERY--WHICH THEY EXPECTED WOULD BE GENERALLY IN FAVOR--THEY WOULD INFORM PRESIDENT CARTER THAT THEY WOULD BE PRESENT TO ENDORSE AND SUPPORT THE TREATY.

4. I ASKED CAP IF ALL NATIONS WOULD BE INVITED. HE SAID THEY WOULD HAVE TO BE. THERE COULD BE NO DISCRIMINATION. HE WAS NOT SURE ALL WOULD AGREE TO COME, E.G. MEXICO MIGHT NOT IF CHILE DID. I ASKED HIM IF THIS MEANT FIDEL CASTRO WOULD BE INVITED. HE SAID HE WOULD HAVE TO BE. AT THIS POINT, CAP SAID THAT THIS WAS VERY IMPORTANT BECAUSE IF CASTRO CAME HE WOULD BE PUBLICLY COMMITTED TO THE TREATY AND WOULD THEREAFTER BE DETERRED FROM LATER OPPOSING OR CRITICIZING IT. IT WAS IMPORTANT TO "COMMIT" CASTRO. I TOLD HIM THAT I WAS NOT AT ALL SURE THAT CASTRO'S PRESENCE WOULD BE AGREEABLE TO US, AND THAT IT WOULD AT LEAST PRESENT COMPLICATIONS. I SUGGESTED THAT THIS MIGHT IN CONFIDENTIAL

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FACT COMPLICATE THE RATIFICATION PROCESS. CAP DEFENDED THE IDEA STRONGLY; HE DID SAY AT ONE POINT THAT CASTRO HAD TO BE INVITED, ALTHOUGH PERHAPS SOMEONE COULD DISSUADE HIM FROM ACCEPTING IF THERE WAS A SERIOUS PROBLEM.

5. CAP ASKED ME TO RELAY THE FOREGOING PLAN TO PRESIDENT CARTER FOR HIS REACTION. HE SAID HE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING OUR REACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

6. B) HIS TOTAL IMPRESSION IS THAT WE ARE ON THE VERGE OF A TREATY, AND HE RECOMMENDED THAT WE PUSH HARD TO SETTLE IT IN THESE NEXT FEW DAYS. THE SITUATION IS SUCH THAT ANY CIRCUMSTANCE, CHANCE REMARK OR EVENT COULD DERAIL THE PROCESS. THE IRON WAS QUITE HOT NOW AND NOW WAS THE TIME TO STRIKE. WE COULD NOT AFFORD TO LOSE THIS OPPORTUNITY. HE HAD TALKED TO TORRIJOS EARLIER IN THE DAY, AND FOUND HIM OPTIMISTIC. HE THEREFORE ASKED ME TO CONVEY TO WASHINGTON HIS (CAP'S) EARNEST RECOMMENDATION TO WIND IT UP NOW.

7. C) AS FAR AS HE COULD TELL TORRIJOS HAD AGREED TO OUR ECONOMIC PROPOSALS IN PRINCIPLE. THERE WAS ONLY

ONE POINT WHICH IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO ACCEPT, VIZ.,
AN OPTION ON A SEA LEVEL CANAL. CAP SAID HE RECOGNIZED
THE VALUE OF THIS TO PRESIDENT CARTER IN SEEKING
SENATORIAL RATIFICATION, BUT HE DID WANT TO TELL US
THAT AS PRESENTLY SHAPED THIS POINT COULD NOT BE
ACCEPTED BY TORRIJOS.

8. COMMENT: CAP IS DEEPLY COMMITTED TO THE IDEA OF
A MEETING OF THE LA CHIEFS OF STATE TO ENDORSE THE TREATY.
IT DOES HAVE MERIT, AND I ASSUME WE WOULD AGREE TO IT.
THE QUESTION OF CASTRO'S INCLUSION IS THE QUESTION MARK
ALTHOUGH CAP IS STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF IT. IF IT GIVES
US PROBLEMS WE SHOULD COME BACK QUICKLY TO HIM--PERHAPS
WITH A CONSTRUCTIVE ALTERNATIVE--IN ORDER TO INFLUENCE
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THE WHEELS WHICH THE BOGOTA MEETING SET IN MOTION.
VAKY

UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

Message Attributes

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